

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A tinnitus method and device for providing relief to a person suffering from the disturbing effects of tinnitus is described. The method can be implemented entirely in software to spectrally modify an audio signal in accordance with a predetermined masking algorithm which modifies the intensity of the audio signal at selected frequencies. A predetermined masking algorithm is described which provides intermittent masking of the tinnitus wherein, at a comfortable listening level, during peaks of the audio signal the tinnitus is completely obscured, whereas during troughs the perception of the tinnitus occasionally emerges. In practice it has been found that such intermittent masking provides an immediate sense of relief, control and relaxation for the person, whilst enabling sufficient perception of the tinnitus for habituation and long term treatment to occur. Advantageously the predetermined masking algorithm is specifically tailored to the audiometric configuration of the person. For example, the masking algorithm may be partly tailored to the hearing loss characteristic of the person. A tinnitus rehabilitation device used in conjunction with a personal sound reproducing system is also described.